

WASHINGTON LETTER
April 1986

JACK ANDERSON'S WASHINGTON LETTER

ASK JACK ANDERSON

In response to my report on Iran-backed terrorism, a Huntsville, Ala., subscriber writes: "It is now admitted that the prime minister of Iran was assassinated by our own CIA and the shah put on the throne. Do you suppose that we can sow the wind and not reap the whirlwind?"

The reader is referring to Mohammed Mossadegh, who ruled Iran in the early 1950s -- an eccentric Iranian nationalist, frail, hairless, wrinkled, given to weeping in public, who appeared preposterous to Occidentals but struck a deep chord in the Iranian psyche. A CIA-backed coup ousted but did not assassinate him -- and brought Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi to power in 1953.

I am one of the few who investigated Mossadegh's overthrow. While this political coup 33 years ago helps explain Iran's hatred of America, it is no justification for the worldwide terrorism of Ayatollah Khomeini.

Dictator Watch: IS KHADAFY REALLY CRAZY?

I have read secret psychological profiles which portray Libya's Muammar Khadafy as erratic and unpredictable, with abrasive convictions that smack of solitary brooding among the dunes. But none of the reports suggested he was crazy.

He appears to have been the product of three basic molding influences. As a nomad of the Sirtic desert, he grew up in a region influenced by the Sanusi, a proselytizing sect that taught a puritanical Islam and inculcated a fierce hatred of things foreign.

As a bedouin, nourished on campfire-bred tribal memories and antipathies, he bore the psychic marks of the Italian onslaught on the bedouins which reached its peak in the early 1930s, the decade before Khadafy's birth.

As an Arab adolescent in the 1950s, he found his hostilities, frustrations and hopes given gripping expression and purposeful synthesis in the broadcasts and deeds of Egypt's late leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser. Khadafy zealously worshiped and romanticized Nasser's mythic image as only a youth can. Nasser became young Khadafy's model in both goals and tactics, in the most methodical sense.

Footnote: President Reagan has ordered the CIA to mount a covert operation to overthrow Khadafy.